

ECLALS

European Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies

Newsletter 2016

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# Introduction by Chair

Helga Ramsey-Kurz

Dear friends, colleagues, and loyal supporters of EACLALS,

I hope this newsletter reaches you looking forward to partaking in this year's many activities concerning 'matters postcolonial' – an admittedly broad circumscription of what constitutes our field of research, but one necessitated by the perceived datedness of the term "Commonwealth literatures and language studies." Clearly, it is as a response to this datedness that the webpage for the next ACLALS conference in June this year defines ACLALS as "an established global forum for presenting and debating research on postcolonial literatures, languages, cultures and art."

For us, the European chapter of this forum, the suggestive rephrasing marks a timely move not only in light of the Commonwealth Foundation's decision to cease all funding of our organisation, but given the dramatic developments we have been witnessing since the so-called refugee crisis began to hit central Europe in spring last year. The steady flow of asylum seekers from Africa and the Middle East into Europe is fast changing our points of reference in postcolonial studies and creating a completely new situation for an academic community used to theorising questions of cultural encounter from a comfortably safe distance and mostly also through the protective screen of a second language.

Especially for postcolonialists in southern, central, and northern Europe this situation holds the promise of a new quality of involvement in the discourses shaping our field and adds urgency to calls emergent in recent years for a distinctly continental take on processes of colonisation and their repercussions. It is not on a mere whim therefore that a small group of EACLALS members have been hatching plans for a journal to provide a platform for the development of specifically European applications and inflections of postcolonial thinking. Wishing to take this idea further we hope to organise a meeting in the second half of this year and would like to invite expressions of interest (to be sent to [chair@eacals.eu](mailto:chair@eacals.eu)) from anyone prepared to take an active part in this admittedly ambitious, but no doubt also exciting venture. By the next EACLALS triennial in Oviedo in early April 2017 we expect to have cemented our plans enough to forge a first issue from papers on the conference theme "Performing the Urban: Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms". The organisers Isabel Carrera Suárez and Liamar Durán Almarza welcome contributions from other fields, so please help us promote their fascinating topic beyond literary studies. Also feel free to propose panels or ask

us to advertise them via our Bulletin. I am pleased to announce that we will again offer travel grants to student members. A corresponding call will be advertised on our website in September and also reach you via email.

Well before Oviedo, I hope to see many of you at the upcoming ACLALS conference "For I am here --- stories that float from afar' Ideas of postcolonial culture: inclusions and exclusions" at Stellenbosch University in South Africa, 10-15 July, 2016. Shaun Viljoen and his team can boast an impressive line-up of keynote speakers and writers including David Atwell, Amit Chaudhuri, Abdulrazak Gurnah, Achille Mbembe, Sarah Nuttall, Mohammad Shabangu, and Yvonne Owuor.

Postgraduate students planning to attend the Stellenbosch conference will like to know that EACLALS has set aside a small number of travel bursaries for them. Applications including the abstract submitted to the conference organisers, a letter of motivation, and a CV should be sent to [chair@eacals.eu](mailto:chair@eacals.eu) no later than 31 March. For more information please see the EACLALS website.

Let me inform also those of you not intending to come to Stellenbosch that chair Michael Wessels is planning to use the conference as an opportunity to discuss the future of ACLALS and how its nine chapters might contribute to it. The role of the European branch will depend very much on the function you believe and expect our association to fulfil. You may think, as many do, that like that of other associations it is in the first place to aid individual careers and research projects, while others may champion the idea originally behind the foundation of ACLALS that its purpose is to jointly build and maintain a field of scholarly inquiry not sufficiently backed by mainstream academia. While not mutually exclusive, both stances require different attention and investment and, logically, different measures for channelling not only membership fees but also the enthusiasm and idealistic commitment of individual delegates. It would be a much appreciated sign of support, if you could spare the time to send us your thoughts on this or any other issue addressed in this newsletter.

Best wishes,  
Helga Ramsey-Kurz



# 16th EACLALS Triennial

## Performing the Urban: Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

University of Oviedo, Spain, 3-9 April 2017

The World Health Organisation estimates that by 2017, the year of the next EACLALS Conference, the majority of the world's population will be living in urban areas. The rapid and continued growth of cities has intensified academic interest in the urban, as material reality and as imaginary or symbolic construction. A postcolonial perspective on the theory and practice of the urban expands Eurocentric notions to include different ways of inhabiting, performing or embodying a variety of cities, while dissecting neo-colonial and decolonial gestures of urbanization. In a globalised world in which the network economy appears to be intrinsically connected to the urban, postcolonial studies also invite us to decentre this dominant narrative by examining the margins and limits of the urban, or indeed non-urban spaces in which other ways of being and dwelling exist or may emerge. The conference will focus on urban performances and the performance of the urban, on their embodied practices, inventories and rhythms.

**Deadline for proposals: 15 October 2016. Website and instructions TBA.**

A preliminary list of topics:

- Performing the urban: enactments of the urban, rhythms, patterns, identities, subjectivities, imaginaries.
- Performance as an urban practice: urban spectacles, audiences; agents, choreographers of the urban; the urban space as stage. Urban drama, comedy, art.
- Representing the urban, writing the city: urban literature, the global city as post/colonial text, alter/native urban imaginaries.
- Resisting the urban: alternative spaces, alternative realities. Crossing the borders of the urban. Changing urban performances: sustainable cities; eco-urbanity.
- Embodied urban encounters: living urban contact; post/trans/human bodies; transcultural exchange. Intersections, cross-overs.
- Bodily performances: art, politics, leisure; street-dwelling.
- Urban inventories: structural, architectural, archival, museistic curating.
- Urban rhythms and/vs historical rhythms: changes in the perception, materiality and enactment of cities. Post/colonial shifts (wars, fears, occupation, liberation, interactions).
- Emotional performances of the urban.

## Organisers

The conference will take place at the University of Oviedo, organized by the research group Intersecciones (Intersections), with a long history of work in Postcolonial Studies. The English Department in Oviedo held the Silver Jubilee EACLALS Triennial Conference, *Translating Cultures*, in 1996, which paid special homage to EACLALS founder Anna Rutherford, with Hena Maes-Jelinek presenting her with the festschrift *A Talent(ed) Digger*. The conference also had Gayatri Spivak and Robert Kroetsch as keynote speakers, and brought together writers Shashi Deshpande, Beverley Farmer, Hiromi Goto, Elizabeth Jolley, C. S. Lakshmi, Alecia MacKenzie, Mrinal Pande, Velma Pollard, Jennifer Strauss, Miriam Tlali, Aritha van Herk, Albert Wendt and Rudy Wiebe, as well as 350 participants. Performing the Urban will build on the strength of this past experience and on the energy of a young group of scholars who are part of the consolidated team working on postcolonialism, cities and gender, and who look forward to receiving participants in Oviedo.

## The City and the University

Located in the North of Spain, and although relatively peripheral to the network of global cities and economic hubs in Europe, Oviedo is affected by, and a participant in, transnational flows, and particularly well-suited to hosting a conference that focuses on the configuration of alternative urban performances. Its attractive historic centre is mostly pedestrian area and invites walking, exploration and convivial meetings. Its location at the heart of the region of Asturias, between the sea and an imposing range of mountains (the Cordillera Cantábrica, with its Alpine-style Picos de Europa), allows post-conference delving into remarkable landscapes and local living.

The University of Oviedo, which celebrated its 400th anniversary in 2008, is one of the oldest and most prestigious Higher Education institutions in Spain. Offering a full range of degrees in all areas of knowledge and a strong postgraduate and research programme, it combines close attention to the region of Asturias with a firmly international outlook, which encourages the open exchange of knowledge and



# The Commonwealth People's Forum

Geoffrey V. Davis

“We have agency”: A short Report on the Commonwealth People's Forum held prior to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting,

A unique feature of the Commonwealth is its incorporation into its structures and deliberations of some ninety civil society organisations (CSOs) of which ACLALS is one. Officially accredited to the Commonwealth, they comprise an extremely diverse group, counting among their number, for example, the Commonwealth Association of Museums, the Commonwealth Human Ecology Council, the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, the Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Federation, the Commonwealth Youth Orchestra and Choir, and the Commonwealth Forestry Association. The range of their activities throughout the fifty-three nations which currently make up the Commonwealth is correspondingly wide.

Every two years a Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting or CHOGM takes place, at which heads of state gather for a retreat to discuss Commonwealth matters and formulate common policies. CHOGM is preceded by a series of fora lasting several days. These are the People's Forum (CPF), the Youth Forum, the Business Forum and, for the first time this year, a Women's Forum. The CSOs, which have previously compiled a Submission to Heads of Government itemizing their concerns, gather at the People's Forum and produce a final declaration based on their proceedings.

These related events are hosted by one of the member states of the Commonwealth, most recently Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, and Australia. This time it was Malta's turn. The 2015 meetings were regarded as particularly crucial to the future of the Commonwealth since the organisation finds itself at a crossroads. Accordingly it has over the past few years been devoting itself to a somewhat fraught and much debated process of internal reform with a view to renewing its relevance and heightening its profile. Malta would also provide the occasion for the heads to elect a new Secretary-General who could hopefully offer the dynamic leadership necessary to take the organisation forward.

The overall theme chosen for the 2015 CPF was “What makes societies resilient?” This was debated in nineteen interdisciplinary sessions devoted to such diverse social issues as Sustainable Energy, Climate Change, Migration, Urbanisation, Women and Governance, Food Security, and Education for Small States (there are over thirty so-called ‘small states’ in the Commonwealth).

Two themes addressed for the first time at a CPF were Indigenous Knowledge and the inclusion of LGBTI (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex) persons, the latter being a highly contentious issue in many countries of the Commonwealth. There were also a number of parallel seminars, including for example the Institute of Commonwealth Studies' presentation of its Oral History Project and the one-day seminar at the University of Malta entitled “The Malta Summit – The Commonwealth's New Beginnings?” which included a session on “Reassessing the Commonwealth's commitment to democracy and human rights”. This report will touch on some issues close to ACLALS concerns.

A welcome feature of this year's CPF was the unusual opportunity given to civil society organisations for dialogue with the candidates for the position of Secretary-General of the Commonwealth. This took place in the House of Representatives of the Parliament of Malta, an impressive new building in Valletta designed by star architect Renzo Piano, and its stated aim was “to place the active participation of civil society in all aspects of the Commonwealth's work on the agenda of the next Secretary-General”. How effectively it did so remains to be seen, but there can be no doubt that this town hall meeting at which members of CSOs fired questions at the candidates did serve to incorporate the CSOs to some extent into the process. For the record, the candidates, all of whom professed commitment to the important role of civil society within the Commonwealth, were Mrs Mmasekgoa Masire-Mwamba from Botswana, the Rt Hon Patricia Scotland from Dominica, and Sir Ronald Sanders from Antigua and Barbuda. After a debate, which by all accounts centred on the choice between the two women candidates, the heads chose Baroness Scotland. So for the first time the Commonwealth now has a woman Secretary-General, an outcome generally welcomed.

One stated aim of the CPF was to “bring indigenous knowledge into forefront of discourse.” Accordingly a session was devoted to “Indigenous knowledge as a driver of resilience”. The speakers were Les Malezer of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples and Canadian Cree activist Clayton Thomas Muller. Asserting that indigenous peoples had long been “invisible peoples” for the Commonwealth, Malezer explained the need for First Nations to maintain their cultural identity, faced as they are with loss of language



and culture. He focused on Aboriginal sensitivity to the environment, praising the “minimalist footprint” which their social practice ensured. Muller, highly critical of the outgoing conservative government under Stephen Harper which had practiced “environmental racism” in its favouring of “big oil” and had in his view set indigenous people in Canada back ten years, confessed himself “cautiously optimistic” at some of the policies espoused by the new liberal government led by Justin Trudeau especially on climate change. It was, he felt, time for the Commonwealth to take up the cause of indigenous peoples.

Several speakers focused on culture, which the Commonwealth recently seems to be taking more account of. Magdalena Moreno Mujica from the Federation of Arts Councils based in Sydney asked what role culture could play in building resilience. Culture, she suggested, was ever “the unsung hero”, often forgotten by governments uncomfortable in dealing with it, but in its diversity essential to sustaining development. “The more diverse the society the more resilient it is”, she concluded.

One session was devoted to exploring cultural responses to conflict from examples of “good practice”. Feryal Gauhar, a Muslim woman from Pakistan, characterised her situation as “living in a state of siege” where women are “objectified” and all too often are targets; her own life had been threatened, she had twice been attacked, and eleven members of her family had fallen victim to sectarian violence. As an artist who felt that she bore particular responsibility for resolving conflict, she movingly illustrated her commitment to this task from her fiction, her work in theatre and her films where she has focused on the marginalised. Not surprisingly she concluded “resilience is not enough, it is resistance that we need”. She was followed by Ruth Ojambo Ochieng from Uganda, who has documented women’s experiences of armed conflict in African and Asian countries, and who then described how women responded to conflict, how they resolved domestic conflict and navigated poverty. Deploring what she called “the tyranny of experts” she proposed that women should be at the very centre of transforming post-conflict societies.

The issue of human rights is particularly contentious in Commonwealth countries, since concepts of what actually constitutes such rights vary so greatly from one society to another. Many in civil society and elsewhere feel that the Commonwealth does not speak out forcefully enough on human rights and is thus undermining its stated values and compromising its credibility. Confronting this issue Maya Daruwala of the Delhi-based Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative argued that the Commonwealth’s low-key response to violence, including violence against women, was not adequate. “You’ve got to take suffering seriously”, she

demanding, and, with reference for example to Sri Lanka, Swaziland and the Maldives, pay more attention to how individual member states behave. She was skeptical of the “good offices” of the Secretary-General since there is little transparency and no progress report on outcomes. Underlining the central importance of the issue she concluded, “The Commonwealth is about human rights or it is about nothing at all”, and in that area it has an ally in the CSOs.

In two of the sessions the host nation itself became the focus of attention, that on small states and that on migration; this proved to be particularly enlightening for those delegates who were not themselves Maltese. Malta’s role as a small state which, preoccupied with larger associations, it has not always been ready to acknowledge, is to be enhanced by the establishment there of a Small States Centre of Excellence. The country’s desire “to pack a punch”, as the prime minister put it, will be further fulfilled when it holds not only the chair of the Commonwealth for the next two years but also, in 2017, of the European Union. Formerly a country of emigration, Malta has had to cope with a large influx of “irregular arrivals” from Libya. Although this has recently abated, the phenomenon has generated uncomfortable questions about citizenship, national identity, security and resettlement, which are now of course shared by the rest of the European community. Katrine Camilleri from Malta itemized some of the negative responses to the crisis she had encountered in her work with asylum seekers, which included denial of basic rights, detention, dehumanisation, attempts to justify abuse, and the refusal to allow migrants a voice. “There has to be a better way”, she concluded, “we have to view migration as a new reality which involves everyone.”

The Commonwealth People’s Forum brought together some 350 delegates from civil society. In his opening remarks at the CPF Kamallesh Sharma, the outgoing secretary-general, spoke of the vigour of the collective networks within the Commonwealth and praised the “robust contributions” of civil society which were, he said, “greatly valued”.

A synthesis of the contributions which emerged from the Commonwealth People’s Forum 2015 is contained in the Malta Declaration on Governance for Resilience, which can be accessed on the web at:

<http://cpf.commonwealthfoundation.com/malta-declaration-on-governance-for-resilience/>

# 13th EASA Biannual International Conference

Jana Ščigulinská  
University of Presov

Between 30 September and 3 October 2015, the University of Pannonia in Veszprém, Hungary, activated its longstanding cooperation with *Topos*, a bilingual journal of Space and Humanities, to host the 13th biannual conference of the European Association for Studies on Australia (EASA). The event offered a singular opportunity for me, as a PhD candidate from Slovakia, to meet experts from the most diverse disciplines sharing an interest in Australian literature and culture, history and politics, land- and cityscapes, societies and population at large. As a member of the team which organised the 10th EASA conference at Prešov University in 2011, I am aware of the immense work put into the 2015 gathering in Veszprém by Eva Forintos, Ildikó Hortobágyi, Andrea F. Szabó, Szilárd Szentgyörgy, and Sándor Czegléd and their students. The conference programme contained an impressive list of scholars from Europe, North America and Australia. Their talks broached the conference theme Australia as *Topos*: The Transformation of Australian Studies from a wide range of angles, accommodating in particular approaches to the spatial conceptualisation of Australia that have been developed in recent years. Following the invitation in EASA's Call for Papers to explore the notion of *topos* itself, the speakers brought together a plurality of ways in which to conceive of Australia as land, continent, common place and commonplace. This yielded inspiring variations on Australia both as physical entity and mental space, as actually experienced as well as imagined territory, as occupied, fought over, lost, and owned terrain, as home to different parties, known, remembered, and represented creatively. Not surprisingly, presentations and discussions kept returning to the coexistence of Aboriginal and other Australians, to tensions that have ensued from this coexistence and the ways in which they have or have not been resolved.

As experimentations with *topos* as a conceptual tool with which to better comprehend Australia, some presentations took me well outside my own sphere of research, i.e. that of literary studies, and into domains I had not expected to visit at the Veszprém conference. This holds true especially of the surprising keynote

lecture given by geologist Eva Papp entitled “‘*Topos*,’ Space-time, Dreamtime.” In it, Papp explained the Aboriginal understanding of place in relation to Dreamtime and established an analogy to Space-time as theorized by early 20th-Century quantum physicists. In his equally original talk about the UNESCO World Heritage List and Australia's place(s) on it, Anthony Gall fascinated with ideas on when and why one might theorise cultural property in Europe as indigenous. Nathaniel O'Reilly, on the other hand, gave an intriguing demonstration of the intrinsic productiveness of the concept of suburbia for studies on identity and belonging and their inflection through space and place, respectively. Martin Renes's presentation, finally, brought Australia closer to us via an analysis of Indigenous-Australian crime fiction.

The next EASA conference will take place in Barcelona in late summer/early autumn 2017. I wish the organisers enthusiasm and energy in preparing this event with the help of newly appointed EASA chair Martin Renes and his board and hope to have a chance to meet them again in Spain.

# AfroEuropeans: Black Cultures and Identities in Europe V

Shanell Johnson

University College London

**Why is my professor not black? Student Perspective  
Conference Report on “AfroEuropeans: Black Cultures  
and Identities in Europe V” (University of Münster,  
Germany, 16–19 September 2015)**

Founded in 2005, “AfroEuropeans: Black Cultures and Identities in Europe” is an international research and development group funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation. African European Studies in its broader context aims to explore the contemporary and historical overlap between Africa and Europe.

This conference was the 5th gathering this time held at the University of Münster, Germany. It aimed to provide perspectives on specific strands of African European Studies, including established and emerging research across the disciplines. The conference recognised that African European Studies cannot be confined to textual representations and therefore delegates from several disciplinary backgrounds were invited to attend.

The conference organiser Mark Stein and his team reached out to various forms of cultural representation, including literature, performance, social sciences, history, politics, and activism.

When I accepted the invitation to be on the Roundtable that discussed the question “Why is my professor not black?” I did so out of a deep sense of responsibility. As the first Black Students’ Officer in the UK while studying at University College London (UCL), I helped to create a platform for discussion at “London’s Global University”. If a university prides itself on being “global” then its teaching staff should also reflect that. In the UK, the reality is that there are 85 black professors out of nearly 20,000, and this number has barely changed. That’s 0.4%, which clearly shows a disparity with the number of Black Students which has increased steadily each year and now stands at 6%. UCL acknowledged that this needs to be addressed and provided a platform for change. So it was very exciting that the University of Münster in Germany wanted to widen the debate to Europe.

For me this conference provided the opportunity to explore issues relating to the construction of an African European identity and culture, not just in a UK context. It also meant I could share my experiences, most importantly the collective journey of UK students which made into a [work of art](#).

The Conference opened with a film screening of [real life: Deutschland](#), which follows the experiences of Afro-German young people who use empowerment theatre as a form of expression. This piece set the stage for the rest of the conference. The opening address was heartfelt as Marta Sofia Lopez Rodriguez articulated her journey over the last 10 years, trying to create a space in the academic scene for AfroEuropeans. She developed the idea that the only way a space can be created is with the willingness to deconstruct the internationally accepted norm of white male dominance.

In her keynote address, Jamie Schearer, an activist based in Germany and London, focused on the work achieved by the European Network of People of African Descent ([ENPAD](#)) and the relevance of self-organised counter spaces. This exploration led to the question ‘how do we build bridges, reduce borders and remain truly connected?’. I’m not an academic but the two questions that arose before lunch were productive: How can an internationally accepted norm be challenged? And how can African Europeans really feel a sense of belonging? With the rise of #BlackLivesMatter in the USA, Jamie Schearer also highlighted the disparity between that campaign and the work that still needed to be achieved in Germany. She pointed out the disproportion in the number of deaths of Blacks in police custody and the high numbers of race related crimes, and showed that we are far from equal.

The first breakaway panel discussions, covered areas, such as “AfroEuropean encounters in contemporary Black British fiction”, “Black Muslim identities”, “Reading children’s literature” and “Memory and museums”. Each discussion had three individuals present their research and this was followed by an in-depth Questions and Answers session.

The first of the two literary readings was by Bernardine Evaristo. She had the hall gripped with laughter when she read an extract from Mr Loverman, her novel about an Antiguan called Barrington who is secretly homosexual while his deeply Christian wife thinks he is cheating on her with another woman. The second reading was by Diran Adebayo. He did the reverse,

bringing the audience close to tears, with a piece where he recollects the details of his brother's death.

The Roundtable discussion chaired by Susheila Nasta, which the conference organisers titled "Why is my professor not black?" followed on from the [UK debate](#). Karim Fereidooni (Heidelberg) pointed out that the reason there are so few black professors is because there are too many white ones. Working in systems where white male dominance is the norm naturally creates a barrier for African Europeans.

This discussion noted the need to document best practice and share strategies that help to create true equality. Equality needs a firm root in predominantly white institutions, not just the universities; it also needs to challenge structural racism within secondary and tertiary education. Emily Ngubia Kessé suggested we strip back the layers of institutional racism by relearning what racism looks like. This includes reducing the barriers to education by ensuring safe learning spaces in the classroom. This starts with early socialising in nursery and primary schools when the construction of identity is formed.

In the UK, we have systematically unlearned racism and there is a lack of understanding due to this process; what we are now seeing is a shift towards labelling poor whites as underprivileged due to their current lack of educational attainment. Often people miss the fact that immigrant families and people new to Europe usually see education as a way out of poverty and often have higher aspirations for their children. In most migrant communities there is a focus on working with each other against all the obstacles to provide an alternative to the life they left behind.

Philipp Khabo Koepsell closed the evening with poems performed in both German and English. He moved the room with his articulation of the Black German experience titled "We are tomorrow":

Europe is not what it is but what it will be  
I speak so you don't speak for me  
We refuse to be identified classified, verified  
and filed under x y z  
[Translation:] to produce different knowledge  
to unlearn the old  
maybe all of this will require more  
than we are willing to sacrifice

This day was filled with intellectual commentary and exploration of issues, but also entertainment to address the real life concerns of Black Europeans. The next round of breakaway groups covered "Remembering Black German History", "Afro-European visual and online cultures", "Afro-European cities and spaces" and "Diasporas, migrations and movements". Each topic

"Diasporas, migrations and movements". Each topic left attendees enriched with information as the topics covered a vast amount of current research and new ideas.

Diran Adebayo provided a second keynote address titled "The footman's new clothes". His writing and delivery is sensitive to issues surrounding race, which he approaches with a self-critical intelligence. He is able to capture our imagination while taking the audience on a compelling journey, touching on current issues.

More breakaway groups included discussions on such topical matters as "Music and identity politics", "Afropolitanism and the Afropolitan", "African American dreams of freedom: Travel, sojourn and escape" and "Black diaspora and Germany: Migrations, imaginaries, interventions". What I found interesting about this group of topics was the exploration of Africanness and Africa in the New World. There was a sense of pride in one's ability to abandon the 'victim' position and focus on simply 'being'. Being in the purest sense of self; how we see ourselves not via a white male-dominated gaze. This promotes an image that transcends pre-conceived ideas of Africa associated with poverty, and invests Africanness, Afropolitanism, and the term Afropolitan with different, more positive connotations.

To close the day on a high, Bernardine Evaristo launched 'The British Centre for Black and Asian Writing'. This will take the form of a website featuring every single British Black or Asian writer who has had writing published or produced in Britain since the 1700s. Bernardine Evaristo's noble quest is to ensure that we can discover Black authors past and present in order to learn about the UK's literary history.

This launch marks a pivotal moment, as this is the first time an online library or resource solely dedicated to recording the Black contribution to British literature has been created. Bernardine is open for contributions to the website, so if you have anything you'd like to add to the resource, contact her at <http://www.bbawriting.com>.

The panels which followed addressed a collection of themes and issues concerning "African communities: Travelling without moving", "On being Afro-Spanish", "Challenging integrationist discourses", and "Transeuropean and diasporic encounters". During the session on "Childhood, parenting and empowerment" Sabrina Brancato spoke on race and adoption and described how her own self-esteem was affected by the racism to which her adopted children tend to be exposed. Her account reinforced Emily Ngubia Kessé's



assertion of the importance of early socialisation to the construction of one's identity.

The conference closed with a final reading by Mustafa Stitou and a Fishbowl discussion titled "African European Studies: Aims, scope, and disciplinarity". The aim of the discussion was to ensure that the audience had the opportunity to share their opinions. The panel rotated, so that the audience could be part of the panel. It was at this point that the artists came to the forefront and spoke eloquently about the need for contemporary texts to be integrated in the curriculum and for relevant study material to be provided. Some strong points were also made for the support of the arts.

The conference enabled me to form friendships with fellow students from Germany, whose campaigns I have been following on twitter #CampusRassismus. They are tweeting about racist experiences that they encounter on campus and trying to ensure that other students are aware that they are not alone. I also met with one student from the conference on her visit to London. Her account of her struggles to complete her PhD and the unconscious bias that she has to endure had me holding back tears. She explained how she was singled out as the only black person in her class and reduced to the part of a spokesperson having to report on behalf of her race. Accounts like this enforce the fact that we have a long way to go and equality has not yet been achieved. This is a responsibility for us all.





# *The Shouting in the Dark* by Elleke Boehmer

Veronika Schuchter

Nottingham Trent University

*"She wonders about the word hate. It comes without thinking about it. Maybe she doesn't mean it. But as she puts down the letters h-a-t-e it gives relief"* (ch. 7).

Ella, the novel's protagonist, is still a child when she discovers writing as an outlet on a flight back from the Netherlands to her home in South Africa during Apartheid. From then on she writes relentlessly about and against the hate she feels herself surrounded by. There is her father who hates his Dutch heritage, in fact anything non-English, the state of the world, black people and, most of all it seems, himself. The mother in turn despises her life on the other side of the equator and views "the distance of South Africa from the Netherlands [as] a personal insult" (ch. 6) and numbs her homesick mind with tranquilisers she also feeds her young daughter.

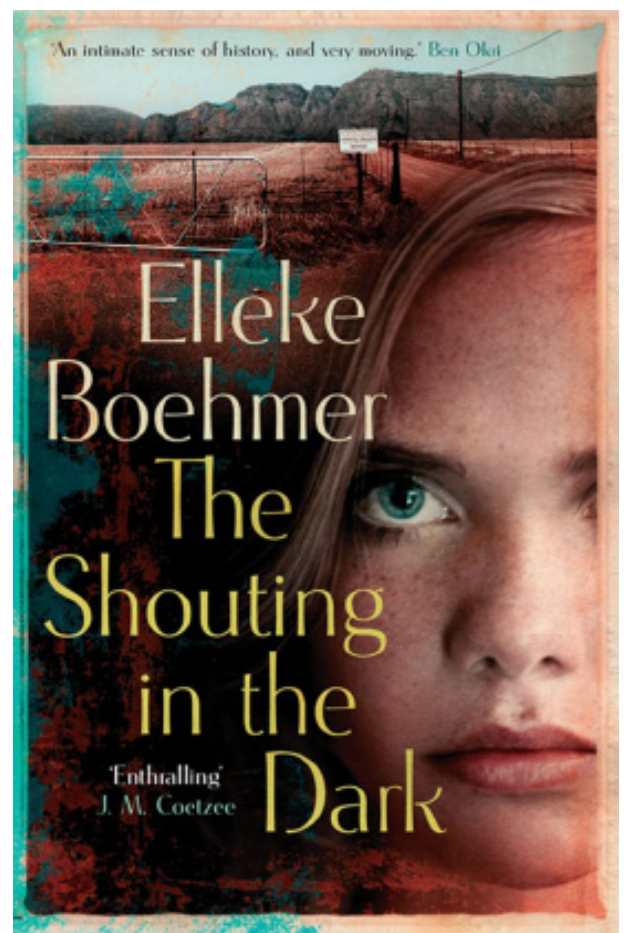
The novel's title refers to the father's late night recounting of old navy war stories he shouts at himself and into the dark on the family home's veranda in Braemar and to which Ella listens from her room in a desperate attempt to form some sort of meaningful relationship with the man who calls her his "un-daughterly thing" (ch. 2). As the novel unfolds, the father grows weaker, due to his advanced age and a terminal illness, and while Ella grows stronger physically and intellectually, it becomes increasingly harder for her to control the hatred she has now internalised. She fantasises that "[i]f she could, she wouldn't only crush his face, she'd flatten his head against the wall, she'd flatten his stupid mouth, his stupid words" (ch. 14). Instead, the protagonist uses her own words as weapons to free herself from her oppressive father and lethargic mother – she finds solace in writing and reading and discovers that her intellectual abilities are key in building a life far from her family and South Africa.

Boehmer's novel, partly autobiographical, is an intense study of a disturbed settler family that demonstrates the extent to which the personal is very much political by carefully documenting a young girl's coming of age who gains confidence by educating herself and developing a voice of her own she demands to be heard despite her father's deeply misogynist attempts to silence and intimidate her.

Ella's story comes full circle when she leaves for Canada on a scholarship and returns to Europe as an activist years later to obtain Dutch citizenship (a scene that is anticipated at the very beginning of the novel) only to be re-acquainted with the firm grip of her father's legacy who had never officially acknowledged her birth or existence, leaving her no choice but to return to South Africa.

Boehmer, Elleke. 2015. *The Shouting in the Dark*. Dingwall, Scotland: Sandstone Press, EPUB file.

For more information on the book, please see the flyer in [Attachments](#).



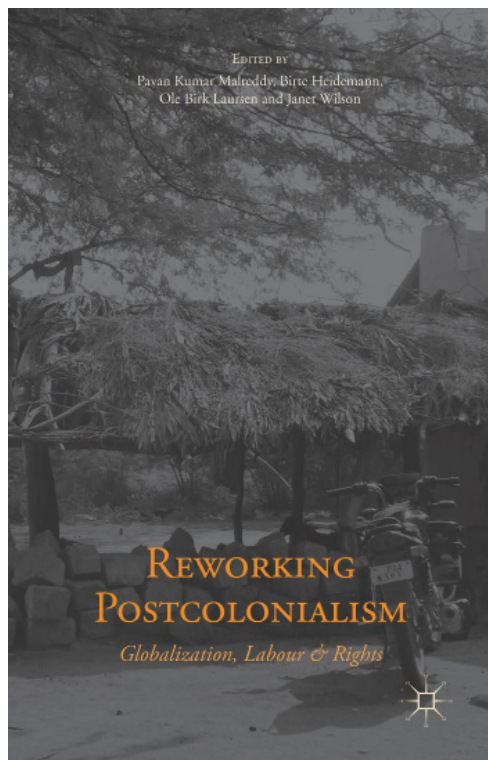


# Reworking Postcolonialism: Globalization, Labour and Rights

Edited by Pavan Kumar Malreddy, Birte Heidemann, Ole Birk Laursen and Janet Wilson

Reworking Postcolonialism is a timely contribution that engages critically with current intersections of globalisation, labour, and rights, and their heterogeneous impacts on subaltern positionalities and subjectivities. Countering a variety of homogenising and normalising discourses that frequently uphold notions of globalisation, labour, and rights - which include Marxism - this collection challenges its readers to dispense with essentialist dichotomies such as global and local, Europe and its colonies, nation and non-nation, Marxism and poststructuralism, and activism and conformism. Notable in particular is the contributors' commitment to nuance where they assess the context-dependent confluences of cultural, political, and economic forces in the production of translocal experience and lived realities. Whilst 'reworking' rather than 'breaking with' Marxism, the volume generates a range of new and important perspectives which safeguard detail, spatio-temporal individuality, and intricate complexity.

More info: <http://www.palgrave.com/page/detail/reworking-postcolonialism-pavan-kumar-malreddy/?K=9781137435927>



**Caroline Kögler** (University of Münster)

What these essays have in common is a concern with the effects of what the editors characterize as 'contemporary globalization', the manifold effects, that is, of the global movement of capital, commodities and people. The editors reason that, such is the world-historical significance as well as the historical novelty of these planetary circuits of people and things, that our existing nation-state-centred understandings of what it is to be a citizen and what it means to have rights are becoming obsolete. The collection could scarcely be more ambitious. How, it asks, do texts of various kinds register and explore the different forms of work, from wage labour to casual or precarious employment, brought about by capitalist globalization? It does not stop there. What sort of rights discourses must we appeal to if we wish to make sense of the political aspirations of the human subjects who do that work? Furthermore, what are the forms of identity, community and culture (of political belonging, in short) brought into being by these workers? The essays are determined not to ditch Marxism but to make critical and effective use of its concepts in order to understand the multifarious phenomenon of capitalist globalization and the thousand forms of reaction and resistance to it.

**Robert Spencer** (University of Manchester)

The full review has been published in the Journal of Postcolonial Writing: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/17449855.2015.1110370>



# *Barefoot in the Saltpans: Poetry Mediterranean* by Daniel Massa

**Stella Borg-Barthet**  
University of Malta

In his foreword to the collection, Jim Crace describes Daniel Massa's poems as "hurtling and secretive", "fearless and demanding". This is true of the new collection *Barefoot in the Saltpans* as it is of all of Daniel's poetry. The density of the poetry results from a process of composition that matures and condenses over a long period. There is a concentration, a concision in the lines that, together with the ingeniousness of the imagery, makes these poems as rich as they are demanding. The new poetry covers diverse aspects of experience – postcolonial themes, love, religion, and the grounds of being itself. The moods, too, are varied – ironic in "Blessings of Empire", nostalgic in "Compostella Triptych", proud in "Barefoot", prayerful in "Purple Epiphany – Turin and Ephesus", playful in "Waiting for the Great White Breach".

One strand of the collection, the postcolonial, goes right back to the poet's emergence in the 1960s. The publishers have done a very good job of putting together poems in English that first appeared some forty years ago in collections long out of print, such as *Limestone 84*, edited by Daniel himself in 1978, and *Malta: The New Poetry*, edited by Mario Azzopardi in 1971. There are small, subtle changes in most of the new versions indicating that the poems continue to reverberate in the poet's mind, and showing a continuous process of composition. In revision, several poems lose conjunctions, most also lose capital letters and punctuation, making the new versions more terse, more open to different readings, and more suggestive of continuity between one poem and the next. The changes in some poems such as "Defloration" and "Ship of Dreams" are more extensive, making new poems out of still recognizable older ones.

But for those who are already familiar with Daniel's poetry in Maltese and in English, the most exciting are some twenty-five new poems, some written very recently. "Blessings of Empire" recalls Queen Victoria's patronage of lace-making in Malta, and the subjugated mentality of the people, which as Frantz Fanon reminds us, is one of the most deleterious

effects of colonisation everywhere.

in a pledge that often set our teeth on edge  
cock-eyed dependent we watched the foreigner measure  
our treasured heirloom vestments of satin and silk  
for eight dozen lace mittens white as souring milk

In the signature poem of this collection, "Barefoot in the Saltpans", the mood is very different. It projects a venturesome sensuality, equally dangerous and redemptive. In Linji Godda (1973) Peter Serracino Ingloft had signalled the significance of John Donne in understanding the direction of Daniel Massa's poetry. This is a matter of style and form, of the condensation in the lines and the ingenuity of the imagery; but it is also, and very importantly, a matter of sensibility which, in Donne, finds its finest expression in the treatment of the love between a man and a woman, and where the poet's concern is as much with the body and the soul as it is with the two lovers.

"Barefoot in the Saltpans", together with the much earlier "Pentecost II" and "Defloration", raises the great metaphysical question of the relation of the spirit to the senses. But whereas in the older poems the subject is male, in "Barefoot in the Saltpans" it is a young girl who dares towards a perilous but essentially sacred sensuality, as the man, father and stranger, watches jealously until he is tempted to follow

dancing like Botticelli's virgin bride in Spring  
on the crystal ring of the shallowest saltpans  
her blue eyes shattered wide  
wounded but unafraid of stranger danger  
her blue-green eyes on fire shuttered  
in carnation petals and myrtle  
shielding grief's divine desire  
teasing hounding calling  
the hunter turned hunted tempting  
either to blades of error vile  
or towards redemption

The collection comes with some very impressive photographs illustrating the subjects of the poems. Taken by the poet's son, Pier, they add a very satisfying visual dimension to the highly rewarding experience of the poems.

AISCLI (Associazione Italiana di Studi sulle Culture e Letterature di Lingua Inglese) is an Italian association for the studies of literatures and cultures in English. It was created in 1999 in Venice and aims to encourage academic research, to promote the growth and development of communication among authors, critics, intellectuals, artists and scholars, and to organise seminars and symposia. Over the years AISCLI has established relationships with international academics, always with the firm intent of spreading a multi-disciplinary knowledge that is shaped by the intersection, influence and exchange of ideas between English postcolonial literatures and other Humanities/Social Science disciplines.

Since 2013, AISCLI has organised a summer school that takes place in Torino at the Department of Foreign Languages, Literatures and Modern Cultures. This yearly appointment can be considered a sort of hub, a meeting point for expertise in the field of postcolonial studies as well as the humanities and students inclined to widen their personal perspectives and knowledge. Members of the AISCLI board, Annalisa Oboe, Carmen Concilio, Pietro Deandrea, Maria Paola Guarducci, Alessandra di Maio, and Marta Cariello have actively participated in the four meetings of the summer school, delivering lectures connected to their field of research. Colleagues and scholars from the Torino Department of Foreign Languages, Literatures and Modern Cultures and from other Italian universities also contributed to the success of the summer school. Every meeting distinguished itself for its wide range of topics, as a matter of fact, the diverse disciplines eventually meet, intersect and merge in English postcolonial literatures. Furthermore, during the years, in addition to contributions from Italian academics, the AISCLI program has included lectures by Michela Borzaga (University of Vienna), Roger Bromley (University of Nottingham), Marius Crisan (West University of Timisoara), Pier Paolo Frassinelli (Monash University, Johannesburg), Bahar Gursel (middle East Technical University), Christa

Knellwolf King (University of Vienna), John McLeod (University of Leeds), Radhika Mohanram (University of Cardiff), Tiziana Morosetti (University of Oxford), Luisa Percopo (University of Cardiff).

Last year, the focus of the programme was on “Welfare, Well-being and Living well”. The presentations covered a wide variety of subjects from post-colonial identity in sports to potential new forms of slavery, from mental health to urban studies, along with criticism of capitalism in India, sport in Palestine, food and health, translation, alterity, the black diaspora in the U.K, and hurricane Katrina. Equally remarkable was the range of genres and media to which those in the audience were exposed during the lectures. Speakers not only highlighted how film and literary fiction intersect and complement each other, but they also referred to historical and clinical literature, photo-essays, professional accounts and documentary films to illustrate their ideas. In conformity with the previous editions, the lectures given provided different cultural and educational perspectives. Students’ presentations brought to a conclusion an intense but extremely stimulating week of meetings and seminars.

[www.aiscli.it](http://www.aiscli.it)

# Announcements by Members

This section contains a short overview of announcements submitted by members. You can find more information (if available) on individual CFPs, project announcements and book publications in the form of attachments at the end of this segment in the same order as they appear here.

## **CALLS FOR PAPERS**

### **17th Triennial ACLALS Conference**

10-15 July, 2016 | Stellenbosch, South Africa

[www.aclals2016.co.za](http://www.aclals2016.co.za)

### **3rd ESSE CONFERENCE**

22-26 August, 2016 | National University of Ireland, Galway

Representing Diversity in Black British and British Asian Children's Literature

Panel Conveners: Petra Tournay-Theodotou (P.Tournay@euc.ac.cy), Sofía Muñoz Valdivieso

Deadline for Submissions: March 11, 2016

### **African-Asian Encounters (III)**

Afrasian Transformations: Beyond Grand Narratives?

28-30 September, 2016 | Goethe University Frankfurt

Deadline for Submissions: March 15, 2016

<http://www.afraso.org/>

### **The IAFOR International Conference on Global Studies 2016**

16-18 July, 2016 | NH Collection Barcelona Constanza, Barcelona, Spain

Deadline for Submissions: March 15, 2016

<http://iafor.org/conferences/global2016/>

### **Australia–South Asia: Contestations and Remonstrances**

26-28 January 2017 | University of Liège

Deadline for Submissions: 15 April, 2016

<https://easaliegeconference2017.wordpress.com>

### **Crisis, Risks and New Regionalisms in Europe: Emergency Diasporas and Borderlands**

June 1-5, 2016 | University of Chemnitz

Deadline for Submissions: 15 April, 2016

### **“Sphere-Born Harmonious Sisters, Voice and Verse”: The Interconnections Between Music and the Written Word**

9-11 September 2016 | Biblioteca Comunale “A. Betti”, Lucca, Italy

Deadline for Submissions: 15 April, 2016

### **Conference of the International Society for Religion, Literature and Culture (ISRLC)**

Lines in Sand: Borders, Conflicts and Transitions

9-11 September, 2016 | University of Glasgow

Deadline for Submissions: 18 April, 2016

<https://linesinsand2016.wordpress.com>

## CHOTRO V

The Chotro conference on Languages, Literature and Arts of the Indigenous originally convened for March 2016 in New Delhi has had to be cancelled. This decision was regrettably taken in the wake of recent writers' and scholars' protests against an increasing atmosphere of intolerance in the country.

## BOOK PUBLICATIONS

### Abdulla Al-Dabbagh

*Seven Essays: Studies in Literature, Drama, and Film*

Three of the seven essays collected in this book, "Race, Gender, and Class in Shakespeare's Sonnets", "Shakespeare and EFL", and "The Achievement of Victorian Orientalism", deal with themes and topics raised in Abdulla Al-Dabbagh's first two books, *Literary Orientalism, Postcolonialism, and Universalism* (Peter Lang, 2010) and *Shakespeare, the Orient, and the Critics* (Peter Lang, 2010). The other three papers, "Literary Studies between Theory and Fallacy", "The Anti-Romantic Reaction in Modern(ist) Criticism", and "Ibsen's Dramatic Art: The Structure of the Social Plays", are essays of literary criticism and literary theory. The seventh and last essay, "Language and Identity in the Renaissance of Kurdish Cinema", ventures into the area of film studies. Five of these essays have been published, or accepted for publication, in scholarly journals, and most of them have been delivered at international or local conferences. They all share the author's unique approach to literary and cultural issues, expressed in his usual lucid, eloquent, and provocative style. Whether discussing the drama of Shakespeare and Ibsen, Kurdish Cinema, or issues of contemporary literary criticism and theory, the author always succeeds in casting new light on these subjects and pointing to new fields of research and investigation.

Peter Lang, 2016

### Elleke Boehmer

*Indian Arrivals 1870-1915: Networks of British Empire*

This book explores the rich and complicated landscape of intercultural contact between Indians and Britons on British soil at the height of empire, as reflected in a range of literary writing, including poetry and life-writing. The book's four decade-based case studies, leading from 1870 and the opening of the Suez Canal, to the first years of the Great War, investigate from several different textual and cultural angles the central place of India in the British metropolitan imagination at this relatively early stage for Indian migration. Focussing on a range of remarkable Indian 'arrivants'—scholars, poets, religious seekers, and political activists including Toru Dutt and Sarojini Naidu, Mohandas Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore—*Indian Arrivals* examines the take-up in the metropolis of the influences and ideas that accompanied their trans-continental movement, including concepts of the west and of cultural decadence, of urban modernity and of cosmopolitan exchange. If, as is now widely accepted, vocabularies of inhabitation, education, citizenship and the law were in many cases developed in colonial spaces like India, and imported into Britain, then, the book suggests, the presence of Indian travellers and migrants needs to be seen as much more central to Britain's understanding of itself, both in historical terms and in relation to the present-day. The book demonstrates how the colonial encounter in all its ambivalence and complexity inflected social relations throughout the empire, including at its heart, in Britain itself.

Oxford University Press, 2015

**J. U. Jacobs**

*Diaspora and Identity in South African Fiction*

South African identities, as they are represented in the contemporary South African novel, are not homogeneous but fractured and often conflicted: African, Afrikaner, “coloured”, English, and Indian – none can be regarded as rooted or pure, whatever essentialist claims members of these various ethnic and cultural communities might want to make for them

All of them, this book argues, are deeply divided and have arisen, directly or indirectly, out of the experience of diasporic displacement, migration and relocation, from the colonial, African and Indian diasporas to present-day migrations into and out of South Africa and diasporic dislocations within Africa.

This study of 20 works by 12 contemporary South African novelists – Breyten Breytenbach, J.M. Coetzee, Nadine Gordimer, Aziz Hassim, Michiel Heyns, Elsa Joubert, Zakes Mda, Njabulo S Ndebele, Karel Schoeman, Patricia Schonstein Pinnock, Ivan Vladislavić and Zoë Wicomb – shows how diaspora is a dominant theme in contemporary South African fiction, and the diasporic subject its most recognisable figure.

UKZN Press, 2016

*Dalit Literatures in India*

**Edited by Joshil K. Abraham, Judith Misrahi-Barak**

This book breaks new ground in the study of Dalit Literature, including in its corpus, a range of genres such as novels, autobiographies, pamphlets, poetry, short stories as well as graphic novels. With contributions from major scholars in the field, it critically examines Dalit literary theory and initiates a dialogue between Dalit writing and Western literary theory.

Routledge, 2016



# The Shouting in the Dark

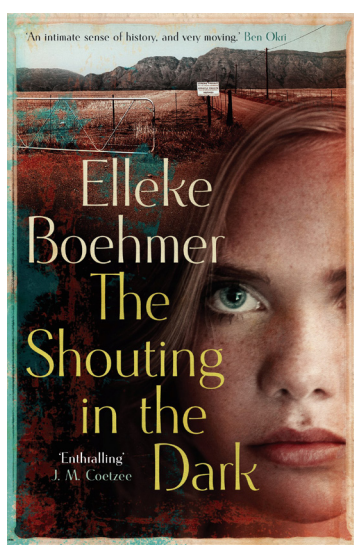
## Elleke Boehmer

'Disturbing as it is enthralling...' JM Coetzee

Publication Date: 16th July 2015  
Category: Contemporary Fiction

Format: B paperback  
RRP: £8.99

ISBN: 9781910124291  
Extent: 320



'An intimate sense of history,  
and very moving.'  
-Ben Okri

'Readable, tangible and  
haunting.'  
-Naomi Wolf, author of *The  
Beauty Myth*

'A beautiful evocation of  
childhood. Like colours slowly  
blooming downstream.'  
-Nadeem Aslam, author of  
*Maps for Lost Lovers*

### ABOUT THIS BOOK

Late at night Ella watches her elderly father on the verandah, raging at the African sky. Caught between her mother's mysterious grief and her father's shattering wartime experiences, between the Holland of their past and apartheid South Africa, Ella fights hard to make it through her childhood in one piece. Her one enchantment is her forbidden love for the teenage gardener, Phineas. Years later, as an activist seeking political refuge in the Netherlands, Ella discovers her father never registered her birth. Now she must confront her father's ghosts, and create a new future for herself.

### SALES & MARKETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Elleke is an International Man Book Prize judge and Professor of World Literature at Oxford University
- She has been short-listed for several prizes

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elleke Boehmer is the author of *Screens against the Sky* (short-listed David Hyam Prize, 1990), *Bloodlines* (shortlisted SANLAM prize), and *Nile Baby* (2008), and also the short-story collection *Sharmilla and Other Portraits* (2010). Her edition of Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys* was a 2004 summer bestseller. Her acclaimed biography of Nelson Mandela (2008) has been translated into over five languages. She has published several other books including *Stories of Women* (2005), the anthology *Empire Writing* (1998), and *Indian Arrivals: Networks of British Empire* (2015).

### AUTHOR LOCATION

London, England





## **Call for Papers**

**DAAD-"Hochschuldialog mit Südeuropa"**

### **"Crisis, Risks and New Regionalisms in Europe II: Emergency Diasporas and Borderlands"**

Technische Universität Chemnitz – English Literatures –  
Prof. Dr. Cecile Sandten  
University of Milan – Department of Studies in Language Mediation and Intercultural  
Communication – Prof. Dr. Claudia Gualtieri

**1 – 5 June 2016 – Chemnitz University of Technology**

#### **Keynote Speakers:**

Prof. Frank Wilderson III (University of California Irvine)  
Prof. Dr. Ulrike Liebert (Jean Monnet Centre for European Studies,  
European Studies at the University of Bremen)  
Prof. Lawrence Grossberg (University of North Carolina)  
Prof. Dr. Heidrun Friese (TU Chemnitz)

The central idea of the conference on "Crisis, Risks and New Regionalisms in Europe II: Emergency Diasporas and Borderlands" (June 2016 in Chemnitz) is to explore the efficacy, limitations and future of Cultural Studies as a theoretical and methodological approach in the analysis of new regional formations and recent crisis phenomena in Europe (with a focus on Germany and Italy). The stability of the EU as a political and economic union of 28 member states; the refugee tragedies off the coast of Lampedusa, Italy; the resurgence of far-right, anti-Islam political groups throughout parts of Europe (e.g. Pegida in Germany), and other pressing issues, can be addressed and discussed from a variety of media, historical, political, gender and aesthetic perspectives that Cultural Studies and Postcolonial Studies encompass. The projected conference is interdisciplinary in nature and involves not only the fields of English Literature, Cultural and Postcolonial Studies but also Gender and Queer Studies, Media Studies, Linguistics, History, Political Science, Sociology, Romance Studies, European Law, and Urban Planning (Chemnitz and Milan being both post-industrial cities).

One of the central aims of the conference will be to arrive at a new working definition of Cultural Studies in conjunction with Postcolonial and Gender Studies within a European context, followed by an outline of new approaches that will be beneficial to the research practices of scholars working in the Humanities and Social Sciences. In particular, we will focus on how post-industrial urban spaces and the perception of migration, emergency diasporas, citizenship, gender and cultural hybridity, literary, historical and historiographical texts continue to be influenced by neo-imperial power structures and globalizing processes of late modernity. We will analyse how these new

approaches will enable us to discuss and understand the financial and political crisis in some of the European countries. Our objective is to lay the foundations of a new Cultural Studies methodology that focuses on crisis phenomena in the context of complex encounters and conflicts, new regionalisms, emergency diasporas, gender studies, and neo-capitalism/neo-colonialism in a German-Italian framework.

The continuity in the cooperation between Milan and Chemnitz is not only supported by the common theoretical and empirical aims that underlie this academic project. The dialogic structure is also reinforced by the specific physiognomy of the city hosting the conference, its cultural and political history and the current resonance of various forms of crisis in its urban spaces. In the light of these challenges, the conference provides a platform to reflect upon the themes that address, but are not restricted to, the following issues:

- General Theory: The Role of Cultural Studies, Postcolonial Studies and Gender Studies (in Germany and Italy)
- European Crisis and Risk Societies
- Gender and Queer Perspectives in the Context of the European Crisis
- New Regionalisms and the Rise of Far-Right, Islamophobic Political Organisations (e.g. the Pegida)
- Political-Aesthetic Discourse of Migration and Borderlands and the 'Rhetoric of Burden' ("unlearning privilege")
- Migration, Neo-Colonialism and Globalisation
- Soft Borders and the Question of Citizenship and (Un)Belonging ('Fortress Europe')
- International Governance, Asylum Policies, Securitization, Border Control
- Testimonies, Stories and Narratives of Migration and Dislocation; Cultural Memory, the Archive and the Media
- Human Trafficking and other Forms of Forced Migration
- The Post-industrial City: Metropolis, Abandoned Buildings/Housing

In order for the participants (academics, experts in the field, young scholars, artists, high-profile students, public) to present in smaller workshops or panels, we invite 20-minute talks followed by discussions and responses in order to facilitate a discursive and lively conference atmosphere.

Please send an abstract (200 - 250 words) of your paper and a brief bio-note to **[cecile.sandten@phil.tu-chemnitz.de](mailto:cecile.sandten@phil.tu-chemnitz.de)**. The call for papers will close on **15 February 2016**. Acceptance letters will be sent by 1 April 2016.

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**Gefördert vom DAAD mit Mitteln des Auswärtigen Amtes (AA)  
Funded by the DAAD / The Federal Foreign Office of Germany**



FONDAZIONE CULTURALE  
MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE  
BAGNI DI LUCCA

## XI INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

### ***“SPHERE-BORN HARMONIOUS SISTERS, VOICE AND VERSE”: THE INTERCONNECTIONS BETWEEN MUSIC AND THE WRITTEN WORD***

**FRIDAY 9 – SATURDAY 10 – SUNDAY 11  
SEPTEMBER 2016**

**Biblioteca Comunale “A. Betti” (Former Anglican Church)  
Viale E. Whipple  
55022 BAGNI DI LUCCA – VILLA (LU) - ITALY**

The “Michel de Montaigne” Foundation along with a group of academics from the University of Pisa and in collaboration with Prof. Tony Bareham (Ulster), the Bagni di Lucca Municipality and the “Istituto Storico Lucchese”, are organizing an International Conference to be held in September 2016. The event comes into line with a long series of annual conferences which, in the last few years, have dealt with topics, historical figures and periods often relevant to the field of Anglo-Italian cultural relations.

Here follow the titles of the conferences organized so far, testifying to an increasing interest in the interconnections that developed between Bagni di Lucca and British or European culture, especially in the second half of the nineteenth century:

2008: *A Homage to Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning*

2008: *Ouida in Exile: The Stubborn Pilgrim*

2009: *A Homage to Michel de Montaigne*

2010: *A Homage to Heinrich Heine*

2010: *The Trollopes: A Family of Writers in Tuscany*

2011: *Art, Literature, the Press, and Exile: Relationships Between the United Kingdom and the Italian Risorgimento*

2012: *Anglo-Italian Cultural Relations in Nineteenth-Century Tuscany*

2013: *Possible and Impossible Worlds: Travelling as a Narrative Pattern*

2014: *An Aesthete at Bagni di Lucca: Ian Greenlees and His World*

2015: *Questions of Gender: The Feminine in Victorian Culture*

The proceedings of most of these conferences have appeared in *Anglistica Pisana* (2009-2014), an academic journal started by Prof. Mario Curreli in 2004.

### *\* Call for Papers \**

The 2016 Conference topic is meant to open up a wide range of insights, cues and analytical approaches marked by an interdisciplinary character and connected with multimedia studies, transcoding experiments and processes.

The Conference title, “‘SPHERE-BORN HARMONIOUS SISTERS, VOICE AND VERSE’: THE INTERCONNECTIONS BETWEEN MUSIC AND THE WRITTEN WORD”, echoes the opening lines of John Milton’s “At a Solemn Music” (“Blest pair of Sirens, pledges of Heaven’s joy, / Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse”), a poem in which the great English author set out to celebrate the heightening power of sacred music and envisaged a marriage between the “divine sounds” of song (Voice) and poetry (Verse). Such celestial melodies seem to touch the very soul of the sensitive listener and thus lead him back towards a blessed prelapsarian state, where he is finally released from the bondage of earthly dissonance (and sin) and might feel again “in tune with Heaven” and its “perfect Diapason”.

The interrelation between sounds and words, between melodic or harmonic systems and verbal constructs, between vocal or instrumental passages and literary expressiveness (in poetry, fiction, drama and essayistic writing) has always represented an extraordinarily fertile field of research to be explored through the means of musicology, of interdisciplinary studies, as well as through the tools of literary theory in its diachronic development, from semiotics to neo-rhetoric and reception aesthetics. Proposals, which should mainly concern British, Italian and Anglophone cultures, may address, but are not restricted to, the following areas:

→ music and literature: comparison of languages, formal procedures, structural and compositional principles (e.g. symphonic orchestration, rhapsody, movements and scores; modularity, recurrence, variation on a theme, *Leitmotiv*, refrain; poems-for-music,

ballads, madrigals, songs and other genres; experimental typologies of interaction between text and music and breaks of canonical frames)

– sonority and word rhythm (e.g. consonance and dissonance, rhyme and accent, tonality and chord, counterpoint and cacophony, pause and acoustic phenomena; voices and polyphony; the paradigm of the signifier and “pure poetry”; non-referentiality, suggestiveness, incantatory power; phonosemantics and phonosymbolism)

– musical theatre, the importance and influence of the Wagnerian concepts of *Gesamtkunstwerk* and *Musikdrama*; “engaged” music, sacred music, mystic and esoteric music

– transposition of literature into music (and viceversa); chamber music, grand opera, operetta, romanza, musical, librettos; transcodification, rewriting, literary texts in pop, jazz and contemporary music in general; ragtime literature, dub poetry, rapping and similar phenomena

– music as a literary theme: the character of the musician, the singer, the dancer; dance, singing, musical performance in literature

– the figure of the man of letters in music

– moments in cultural history when music played a crucial role in creating new epistemic and literary models (e.g. Mallarmé, Symbolism and modernity).

Information queries and paper proposals must be sent to Marcello Cherubini, Chairman of the “Michel de Montaigne” Foundation, [cherubini40@alice.it](mailto:cherubini40@alice.it); cell. 335-5821080

and/or Professors Tony Bareham, [terencebareham@gmail.com](mailto:terencebareham@gmail.com)

Laura Giovannelli, [laura.giovannelli@unipi.it](mailto:laura.giovannelli@unipi.it)

Roberta Ferrari, [roberta.ferrari@unipi.it](mailto:roberta.ferrari@unipi.it)

\* **Abstracts** (max 300 words) and a **CV** (max 150 words) are to be sent **by April 15, 2016**.

\* Paper presentations should not exceed a 30-minute span.

\* In order to facilitate and promote cultural interchange, participants should also provide a *résumé* of their paper in Italian (if their presentation is in English) or in English (if their presentation is in Italian). The secretarial staff will be in charge of distributing handouts.

\* Notification of acceptance will be given **by May 5, 2016**.

\*\*\*\*\*

Those who wish to participate, whether as speakers or audience, should also fill in and send the enclosed Registration Form by June 15, 2016.

Certificates of attendance can be provided to students, teachers and paper contributors through the Secretary's Office.

The registration fee amounts to **€ 80,00 (eighty euros) per head** and includes: stationery costs, coffee- and tea-breaks throughout the Conference sessions; the dinner on Friday, the lunch and social dinner on Saturday; a night piano/vocal concert; a copy of the *Tourist Guide Book to Bagni di Lucca*.

Payment should be made by bank transfer to:

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Contributors and participants may book a room at the hotels which have an arrangement with the Foundation. A list of these hotels and their rates will be available in due course.

**REGISTRATION FORM**  
**(to be filled in and sent by JUNE 15, 2016)**

**To Professor Marcello Cherubini**

Chairman of the "Michel de Montaigne" Foundation

C.P. / P.O. Box 64,

55022 BAGNI DI LUCCA (LU) - ITALY

[cherubini40@alice.it](mailto:cherubini40@alice.it)

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I would like to submit a paper on \_\_\_\_\_,  
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**ELLEKE BOEHMER** is Professor of World Literature in English at the University of Oxford.

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Indian  
arrivals  
1870–1915

*Networks of British Empire*

ELLEKE BOEHMER

*Indian Arrivals 1870–1915: Networks of British Empire* explores the rich and complicated landscape of intercultural contact between Indians and Britons on British soil at the height of empire, as reflected in a range of literary writing, including poetry and life-writing. The book’s four decade-based case studies, leading from 1870 and the opening of the Suez Canal, to the first years of the Great War, investigate from several different textual and cultural angles the central place of India in the British metropolitan imagination at this relatively early stage for Indian migration. Focussing on a range of remarkable Indian ‘arrivants’—scholars, poets, religious seekers, and political activists including Toru Dutt and Sarojini Naidu, Mohandas Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore—*Indian Arrivals* examines the take-up in the metropolis of the influences and ideas that accompanied their trans-continental movement, including concepts of the west and of cultural decadence, of urban modernity and of cosmopolitan exchange. If, as is now widely accepted, vocabularies of inhabitation, education, citizenship and the law were in many cases developed in colonial spaces like India, and imported into Britain, then, the book suggests, the presence of Indian travellers and migrants needs to be seen as much more central to Britain’s understanding of itself, both in historical terms and in relation to the present-day. The book demonstrates how the colonial encounter in all its ambivalence and complexity inflected social relations throughout the empire, including at its heart, in Britain itself.